

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 089647  
ORIGIN NEA-10

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66011  
DRAFTED BY NEA:MDRAPER  
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-----041462 071611Z /45  
O 071550Z APR 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 089647

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

FOLLOWING REPEAT BEIRUT 1951 ACTION STATE APR 6.

QUOTE S E C R E T BEIRUT 1951

STADIS

OR NEA/ARN DRAPER FROM GROSS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MORG LE  
SUBJ: INTERIM TEAM REPORT

1. HAD HOPED TO BE ABLE TO TRANSMIT DEFINITIVE  
RESPONSE CONCERNING RECENT LAF ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT  
LIST BY THIS POINT. THOUGH TEAM HAS RECEIVED  
COMPREHENSIVE HEADQUARTER BRIEFINGS AND VISITED BOTH NEW  
BATTALIONS AT YARZE, IT STILL NOT CLEAR WHAT IMMEDIATE  
EQUIPMENT NEEDS ARE NOR WHAT EFFECT 5,000 M-16S ET AL  
WOULD HAVE.

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2. WHAT HAS BECOME CLEAR SO FAR IS HIGH LEVEL OF  
ESPRIT AND MOTIVATION OF JUNIOR OFFICERS AND,  
APPARENTLY, NEW SOLDIERS WE HAVE SEEN AND TALKED WITH  
TO DATE. WHAT IS ALSO CLEAR IS THAT NOT NEARLY ENOUGH  
EQUIPMENT IS ON HAND. TWO NEW BATTALIONS HAVE ONLY INDIVIDUAL  
WEAPONS AND 19 M-113 APC'S EACH. THEY ARE GOING  
THROUGH FAIRLY INTENSIVE DRIVER AND TACTICAL

EXERCISES WITH APC'S, THE ON-VEHICLE .50 CAL. MACHINE GUNS AND THE M-16'S. DRILLS WE SAW, THOUGH OBVIOUSLY STAGED FOR OUR BENEFIT, WERE IMPRESSIVE IF RUDIMENTARY.

3. SOUTHWARD MOVEMENT STILL APPEARS VERY MUCH MOOT. CDR. OF CURRENT BEQAA BRIGADE, STAFFED TO BECOME LITANI BRIGADE, TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT HE HAS ABOUT 1000 (NOT 3000) TROOPS READY TO GO SOUTH. THOUGH THIS STRENGTH PERHAPS SUFFICIENT TO ESTABLISH SYMBOLIC PRESENCE, IT CLEARLY TOO SMALL TO HAVE DESIRED IMPACT. EXPECT TO VISIT ABLAH SATURDAY WHERE WE WILL DELVE FURTHER INTO WHETHER SHORTCOMINGS IN THIS FORCE ARE MANPOWER OR MATERIAL-RELATED OR BOTH. IF CRUDE MANPOWER OR TRAINING PROBLEMS ARE DETERRENTS, SURELY ADDITIONAL RIFLES AND TENTAGE WILL NOT SPEED SOUTHWARD DEPLOYMENT. CONVERSELY, GROSS EQUIPMENT SHORTAGE WE PERCEIVE SO FAR MAY BE INSUFFICIENTLY ADDRESSED IN LIST BEFORE YOU NOW.

4. SOME TANGENTIAL THOUGHTS.

A. DURING LONG AND EARNEST PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH CHEF DU CABINET MILITAIRE ROGER AKL SEVERAL GOALS OF LAF CAME OUT WITH CRYSTAL CLARITY. FIRST, MILITARY FIRMLY COMMITTED TO STRONG, EVEN POWERFUL (RELATIVELY) ORGANIZATION. POINT MADE WAS THAT LEGITIMATE FORCES  
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MUST HAVE MORE PUNCH THAN CONFESSIONAL MILITIAS IF ONLY TO ATTRACT RECRUITS WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE GRAVITATE TO LATTER. SECONDLY, AKL ET AL BELIEVE CONFRONTATION WITH PLO INEVITABLE, EVEN DESIRABLE. THOUGHT EPITOMIZED BY APHORISM: QUOTE ONE PALESTINIAN IN SEA IS JUST POLLUTION, ALL PALESTINIANS IN SEA IS THE SOLUTION UNQUOTE. LAF ITSELF INDICATED RECRUITING GOAL FOR NEXT 3 - 5 YEARS IS FORCE OF OVER 30,000; ONE SOURCE EVEN INDICATED THAT 60,000 NOT OUTLANDISH (TWO PER THOUSAND OF POPULATION). THIS CAME OUT IN COURSE OF OFFICIAL BRIEFINGS.

B. CONFESSIONAL INTEGRATION IS MORE THAN THEORETICAL GOAL. RECRUITS NOW BEING INTEGRATED ARE MIXED DOWN TO SQUAD LEVEL WITH NO REPORTED OR APPARENT PROBLEM. WHETHER THIS CAN BE DONE IN OLDER, ESTABLISHED UNITS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. LAF CONSCIOUSLY USING SPECTRE OF PLO OPPOSITON AS CEMENTING FORCE IN THIS RESPECT.

C. SAME HESITANCY REGARDING SOUTHWARD MOVE STEMS FROM CONCERN THAT IF BEST UNITS ARE SOUTH OF LITANI,

SYRIANS PROVIDED FULL REIN TO ESTABLISH MORE LASTING  
PRESENCE IN CENTRAL LEBANON, EVEN BOX IN LAF FORCES  
BETWEEN PLO AND THEMSELVES.

5. IN LAST ANALYSIS, IT APPEARS PRELIMINARILY THAT  
CURRENT EQUIPMENT WANT LIST HAS NO OVERRIDING CON-  
NECTION WITH SITUATION, NOR WILL FAVORABLE USG  
RESPONSE GREATLY INFLUENCE TIMETABLE FOR SOUTHWARD  
DEPLOYMENT. CONVERSELY, LAF CONFIDENCE IS CLOSELY TIED TO  
ADEQUATE MATERIAL PICTURE. GIVEN THAT LIST CONTAINS  
NO EXOTIC ITEMS, IT PERHAPS WORTHWHILE INTERIM, RESOLVE  
BUILDING STEP TO RESPOND FAVORABLY TO REQUEST  
EVEN BEFORE TEAM'S REPORT RENDERED. PARKER UNQUOTE  
VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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